

## **PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)**

### **Youth Leadership Program** **ECA/PE/C/PY-11-69**

Office of Citizen Exchanges

Youth Programs Division

These POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) for the Youth Leadership Program. Proposals must conform to the RFGP, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between information supplied in the RFGP and these Guidelines, the RFGP is to be the dominant reference.

This document not only provides guidance for the preparation of a proposal to provide specific support to the Office of Citizen Exchanges, but also establishes guidelines for the implementation of the projects.

### **I. STATEMENT OF WORK**

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and the Public Affairs Sections (PAS) of U.S. Embassies will support a Youth Leadership Program to serve special requests from U.S. Embassies to meet emerging needs. The program will support the participation of high school youth and adult educators in intensive, substantive three-week exchanges in the United States.

The exchange activities will introduce the participants to a comprehensive survey of civic education, community service, and youth leadership development. Activities will focus on building their knowledge and skill levels in these areas. The students and educators will participate in workshops, community service activities, meetings with community leaders, and discussion groups and will have opportunities for substantive interaction with each other and their American peers. The award recipient will need to demonstrate creativity and flexibility in its program planning.

Responsibilities of the award recipient for this program include:

- 1) Recruitment and Selection
  - a) All exchange participants will be identified by U.S. Embassies' Public Affairs Sections (PAS), with clearly identified criteria for a formal selection process.
- 2) Preparation
  - a) Contact participants before the program to provide them with program information, pre-departure materials, and to gather information about their specific needs, in collaboration with PAS.

- b) Hire and train staff, as needed, to accompany participants during the exchange period. Criminal background checks must be conducted for all program staff.
- c) Make housing arrangements. Carefully recruit, screen, and select diverse local host families to offer homestays (lodging and meals) to the participants for the majority of the exchange period. Criminal background checks must be conducted for members of host families (and others living in the home) who are 18 years or older. Monitor housing arrangements to ensure the health and safety of participants.
- d) Orient host institutions, staff, and families to the goals of the program, and to the cultures and sensitivities of the visitors.
- e) Arrange international and domestic travel for the participants.
- f) Enroll participants in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) health benefits plan for the duration of the exchange, and assist with claims as necessary. Enroll participants in the Bureau's health benefits plan for the period of the exchange.

### 3) Exchange Activities

- a) Design, plan, and implement an intensive and substantive three-week exchange program on the stated themes. Exchange activities must promote program goals. Activities will be school and community-based, as appropriate to the project. Recruit local peers to be engaged in activities with the exchange participants.
- b) Provide opportunities for the adult participants to work with their peers and other professionals, volunteers, and youth advocates with whom they can discuss the support of youth development.
- c) Arrange appropriate community, cultural, social, and civic activities.
- d) Engage participants in at least two community service activities during the exchange. The program should provide context for the participants – identifying community needs, volunteerism, charitable giving, etc. – and a debriefing so that the service activity is not an isolated event and helps participants see how to apply the experience at home.
- e) Provide day-to-day monitoring of the participants' well-being, preventing and dealing with any misunderstandings or adjustment issues that may arise in a timely manner. Inform ECA and PAS about any significant health or safety issues affecting program participants.
- f) Provide a welcome orientation to serve as an introduction to the program and its objectives as well as an introduction to the United States.
- g) Provide a closing session to summarize project activities, prepare participants for their return home, and plan for the future.

### 4) Follow-on activities

- a) Provide guidance and support for participants' implementation of follow-on projects that reinforce values and skills imparted during the exchange program and help them apply what they have learned to serve their schools and communities.
- b) Present creative and effective ways to address project themes, for both program participants and their peers, as a means to amplify program impact.
- c) Support alumni in making presentations or preparing articles to share their experiences once they return home.

- d) [Optional] Arrange visits by project staff, trainers, or educators to one or more of the participating countries to further the training started during the exchange.

5) Design and implement an evaluation plan that assesses the impact of the program (See section IV.3d.3 of the RFGP).

6) Work in consultation with ECA in the implementation of the program, provide timely reporting of progress to ECA, and comply with financial and program reporting requirements.

7) Manage all financial aspects of the program, including management of sub-award relationships with partner organizations.

All participants will travel on a U.S. Government designation for the J Exchange Visitor Program. ECA will prepare the appropriate DS-2019 forms from the applications of accepted finalists and forward these to our representatives overseas so that participants may apply for J-1 visas for entry to the United States. The award recipient must cooperate in the compliance with the J Exchange Visitor Program. The Bureau will provide an accident and sickness health benefits program for the exchange participants.

## **II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES**

Selection and orientation: PAS will recruit, screen, and select the participants in the participating countries. PAS will provide a pre-departure orientation for the participants, with program-specific information provided by the award recipient.

Participants: The youth participants will be high school students between the ages of 15 and 18 who have demonstrated leadership aptitude, an interest in community service, and the project themes; exhibit flexibility, maturity, integrity, good social skills, and open-mindedness; and have the motivation necessary to be active and successful exchange participants. The delegation will also include adult participants who are teachers, trainers, or community leaders who work with youth; exhibit maturity and open-mindedness; are supportive of the teenage participants; and will remain in positions of influence on young leaders. The adults are to be full exchange participants, but will also serve as chaperones to some extent. They will have program sessions with the youth, as well as separate program activities designed just for them. The participants will be proficient in the English language.

Exchange Program: The program should consist primarily of interactive activities, practical experiences, and other opportunities that provide an introduction to the civic, cultural, and educational institutions of the United States. Activities should use hands-on methods to help the participants learn about the fundamentals of civil society and community activism, build their leadership skills, and develop similar activities for their peers back home. The Bureau urges applicants to present innovative, resourceful, and effective programming ideas. Applicants should justify their choices by explaining how their program plan will meet the stated goals.

The activities could include a mix of workshops or training sessions, simulations and role-playing, teambuilding exercises, case studies, volunteer service, leadership training, meetings, classroom visits, site visits, and social time among peers. Many of these should be planned in conjunction with participation in school and community activities in a way that is educational both for the exchange participants and their hosts/peers. Exchange participants should not attend classes in a school for more than a few days. All programming should include local peers wherever possible. Cultural and recreational activities will balance the schedule. The program will also provide opportunities for the adult educators to work with their peers and other professionals to learn about new topics and methods in education and support for youth activism.

Examples of the kinds of program activities that may be included:

- Community service/volunteer activities
- Peer training/education workshops
- Teambuilding exercises
- Leadership development with workshop trainers or organizations
- Meetings with government, community, and business leaders
- Computer training that emphasizes research, critical thinking, and analysis, and the use of the computer and Internet as resources in education and business
- Exercises related to increasing tolerance and developing strategies for future collaboration and cooperation among participants
- Dialogues, simulations, role plays and other activities aimed at helping participants articulate their thoughts about the project's themes
- Visits to historical sites, government and community centers, museums and landmarks that combine learning about principles of government, history, and society with tourism
- Sports, drama, fine arts, musical and other extracurricular activities which provide opportunities for participants to work and play together.

The award recipient will conduct a welcome orientation for the participants upon arrival in the United States to introduce them to the program and the community. Exchanges will end with a closing session that focuses on summarizing the experience, developing action plans for activities at home, and preparing for re-entry. The ideas and action plans to be implemented at home should spring from the participants, but the project staff should be prepared to encourage, assist and direct the participants in developing these plans both during the exchange and during the follow-on period.

Sites: The delegations should spend time in no more than two or three locations so that the participants have time to familiarize themselves with a community. Applicant organizations should describe the rationale for their location selections. The Bureau encourages applicants to consider proximity to sites of historical or cultural interest, access to organizations that can conduct appropriate workshops, and representation of the diversity of the host country. If applicants choose to arrange a portion of the program in Washington, D.C., the Bureau will assist in setting up a meeting with the participants at the Department of State.

Accommodations: Homestays with local families must be arranged for the majority of the exchange period. A dormitory, hotel, or other housing with appropriate adult supervision is an

acceptable arrangement for some segments of the program, such as the welcome orientation, the closing session, or special workshops.

The award recipient must have a clear and detailed recruitment, screening, and selection process for host families. They must also provide the families with an orientation prior to the arrival of their exchange participants, emphasizing the goals of the program. Screening needs to include a visit to the home to meet all members of the household to ensure that the host family is capable of providing a comfortable and nurturing home environment. Criminal background checks must be conducted for members of host families (and others living in the home) who are 18 years of age or older. The orientation will provide families with detailed information on the exchange program, the parameters of their participation, duties and obligations, and information on cultural differences and practices.

ECA encourages diversity in the recruitment and selection of host families. They may represent diversity in family size and structure, race and ethnicity, socio-economic status, religion, and geography. While exchange participants may share a room with someone of a similar age and the same gender, they must have their own bed. Participants may be placed with host families as singles or in pairs. Host families need to have adequate financial resources to undertake hosting obligations.

Follow-on Activities: The award recipient will design activities for alumni, in coordination with the U.S. Embassies. Recipients should support and mentor youth participants in the implementation of their follow-on projects. This may include the provision of materials, serving as a resource or advisor, and working with the Embassies and adult participant alumni to help nurture on-going contact with the participants. Continued engagement among the participants, in the form of seminars, newsletters, and listservs serves to maximize and extend the benefit of the exchange program. Internet access may be limited in some areas, and should be facilitated for those who do not have regular access. All alumni contact information gathered by the award recipients on behalf of this program must be made available to the Department of State. Please refer to the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for additional guidance.

Evaluation: The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 requires that federal agencies measure the results of their programs in meeting performance goals. The proposal should demonstrate the applicant's plan to measure the medium-term impact of the program. The follow-on activities will provide an opportunity to assess the impact of the exchanges on the participants, to determine how their attitudes have changed, and to evaluate the acquisition of knowledge and skills associated with program themes.

Other notes: The recipient organization is responsible for all components of the program outlined in this document. In addition, the Bureau requires recipient organizations to communicate with ECA and PAS on a regular basis about program activities. The organization must also inform the ECA Program Officer of their progress at each stage of the project's implementation in a timely fashion, and will be required to obtain approval of any significant program changes in advance of their implementation. All materials and correspondence related to the program will acknowledge this as a program of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of

Educational and Cultural Affairs. The Bureau will retain copyright use of and can distribute materials related to this program as it sees fit.

The responsibilities of the Department of State will be the following:

- 1) Provide advice and assistance in the execution of all program components.
- 2) Manage the recruitment and selection of the participants overseas, provide pre-departure briefings, and oversee follow-on activities in coordination with the award recipient.
- 3) Issue DS-2019 forms and J-1 visas. All foreign participants will travel on a U.S. Government designation for the J Exchange Visitor Program.
- 4) Facilitate interaction within the Department of State, to include ECA, the regional bureaus, and overseas posts.
- 5) Arrange any meetings with Department of State officials in Washington, D.C. and the participating countries.
- 6) Approve publicity materials and final calendar of exchange activities.
- 7) Monitor and evaluate the program, through regular communication with the award recipient and possibly one or more site visits.

### **III. PROPOSAL CONTENTS**

Applicants should submit a proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible. The proposal should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements. The proposal should include the following items:

#### ***TAB A - Application for Federal Assistance Cover Sheet (SF-424)***

#### ***TAB B - Executive Summary***

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Identification of the applicant and any significant partner organizations
2. Beginning and ending dates of the exchanges
3. Proposed themes and subthemes
4. Nature of activity and venues
5. Funding level requested from the Bureau, program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources

#### ***TAB C - Narrative***

Within 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below. In the narrative, applicants should not only describe major program activities but also explain and justify their programmatic choices.

1. Vision: Describe the project objectives and the desired outcomes, i.e., the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudinal changes that the participants will acquire.

2. **Participating Organizations:** Identify any partner organizations for the program, their roles, and the applicant's reasons for including them.
3. **Project Activities:** Describe the components of the exchanges and how they related to project themes, including project planning, orientations, educational activities, cultural activities, meetings, site visits, community service, and the closing session. A detailed outline of the three-week exchanges should be included as an appendix in Tab E. Also, describe support for follow-on activities.
4. **Travel, Housing, and Other Logistics:** Detail how the applicant will arrange homestays and other housing arrangements; international and domestic travel and ground transportation; stipend disbursement; and relevant administrative matters.
5. **Program Monitoring and Evaluation:** The progress of the cooperative agreement should be monitored closely and ECA and PAS must be kept informed of activities. Proposals should include a plan describing how success in meeting the stated goals of the program will be measured and reported. ECA recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other evaluation tool.
6. **Diversity:** Explain how the program managers will pro-actively support diversity in program design and content, demonstrating how diversity can contribute to a vibrant civil society. Diversity should be defined broadly to include geographic, urban/rural, ethnic, racial, socio-economic, and religious diversity.
7. **Institutional Capacity and Project Management:** Outline the applicant organization's capacity to conduct projects of this nature, focusing on competency in the provision of educational and thematic programs and age-appropriate programming for youth. Describe the program staffing (individuals by name and responsibilities), qualifications, structure, and resources. If applicable, include this information for primary partner organizations as well.
8. **Work Plan/Schedule:** Outline the phases of the project planning and implementation for the entire cooperative agreement period. Provide a draft schedule of daily activities of the exchanges in an appendix.

#### ***TAB D - Budget Submission***

The funding available for this cooperative agreement is approximately \$600,000 and should support approximately 70-90 participants. ECA intends to award one cooperative agreement. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.

The available funding may be used to support the program and administrative costs necessary to implement the program as described in this solicitation. Please submit a comprehensive line item budget, as stated in the Proposal Submission Instructions. An explanatory budget narrative must also be included. For clarification, any applicant applying to implement more than one project should provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity.

Suggested program costs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Staff travel
- Educational materials
- Participant travel (international airfare, domestic travel within the United States, and local ground transportation)
- Orientations
- Cultural and social activities
- Meeting costs
- Lodging, when not in homestay
- Food (primarily group meals when not in homestay)
- Follow-on activities
- Evaluation
- Pocket money for participants' incidental expenses
- Other justifiable expenses directly related to supporting program activities

Significant cost-sharing is expected and will enhance the proposal. Payment for homestays or for host families in the United States is not allowed as a grant-funded or cost-share item. While there is no rigid ratio of administrative to program costs, the Bureau urges applicants to keep administrative costs as low and reasonable as possible. Proposals should show strong administrative cost-sharing contributions from the applicant and other sources.

In order to budget for international airfare from countries that have not yet been identified, please estimate an average cost of \$2,500 per round-trip ticket between the partner country and the United States.

Maximum limits on funding are as follows: Books and educational materials allowance-\$100 per participant; Conference room rental costs-\$250 per day per room; Consultant fees and honoraria-\$250/day; Cultural allowance-\$150 per participant; Per diem-standard government rates; Evaluation costs- 3% of the cooperative agreement. Organizations are encouraged to cost-share any rates that exceed these amounts.

Please note that the U.S. Embassies in the participating countries will cover recruitment and selection costs, pre-departure orientation expenses for participants, passport and visa fees (if necessary), and a travel allowance. Exchange participants will be enrolled in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) to provide them with health benefits during the exchange. This cost does not need to be included in the budget. More information on ASPE is available at <http://www.usdos.sevencorners.com>.

Please refer to the PSI for allowable costs and complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

#### ***TAB E***

- *Letters of commitment.* Include pledges to participate in the program's implementation from significant partner organizations.
- *Resumes* of all program staff should be included in the submission. No one resume should exceed two pages.



- *Attachments/appendices* (please limit to those materials essential for understanding the proposed program such as a draft schedule, application forms, or evaluation questionnaires).

#### **TAB F**

- 1.) SF-424B, "Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs."
- 2.) First time applicant organizations and organizations which have not received an assistance award (grant or cooperative agreement) from the Bureau during the past three (3) years, must submit as an attachment to this form the following: (a) one copy of their Charter OR Articles of Incorporation; (b) a list of the current Board of Directors; and (c) current financial statements. Note: The Bureau retains the right to ask for additional documentation of those items included on this form.
- 3.) **Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:
  - Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.
  - Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one- page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

- 4.) Include other attachments, if applicable, i.e. the SF-LLL form, etc.

#### **IV. APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

Please refer to Section IV.3F of the RFGP document for specific information regarding the application deadline and methods of submission. For further information on the program or the proposal submission, contact the Youth Programs Division Program Officer Sarah Shields, Telephone: (202) 632-9261; Fax: (202) 632-9355; e-mail address: ShieldsSD@state.gov.